



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE DANGER OF PERSONAL RULE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

BY MONTAGU WHITE, RECENTLY CONSUL-GENERAL OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC IN LONDON.

VARIOUS motives have been put forward to justify the war which is at present paralyzing the commercial, political and social life of South Africa. "Equal rights for all white men in the Transvaal," "No taxation without representation," "The redress of the Uitlanders' grievances," "The maintenance of British supremacy or paramountcy," are among the more plausible reasons advanced by the war party.

The disclaimer of Lord Salisbury, "We seek no territories, we seek no gold fields," provoked a storm of protest and explanation from the Unionist press, and will no doubt be carefully scrutinized at the conclusion of hostilities.

On the other hand, the war has been proclaimed inevitable on account of the "Great Dutch Conspiracy"—a theory suggested by two facts: first, the open and public arming of the Transvaal on an extensive scale since the Jameson Raid, and secondly, the action of the Orange Free State, unexpected by Great Britain, in joining the Transvaal in order to resist the extinction of the latter Republic by imperial aggression. This theory was eagerly adopted and developed in the interests of political opportunism, in order to cover the retreat of the clumsy diplomacy and the lack of statesmanship which has characterized the British negotiations with the South African Republic during the last four years. An elementary knowledge of South African conditions and sentiment is sufficient to banish this absurd "nightmare" from the area of serious controversy.

It would be impossible to discuss at length the various influ-

ences and forces all heading straight for this war. It is only necessary to make a brief reference to some of the more important causes. First of all, a discontented and irreconcilable British element in Johannesburg was one of the most potent factors. This element was confronted by an original population of Dutch farmers, whose conservatism was intensified by sixty-five years of bitter experience of Great Britain. The sudden inrush of a mining, commercial and speculative community was a complicated problem which would have taxed the abilities and resources of the best organized administration in the world. Even Great Britain was at first unsuccessful in governing the smaller population of the Diamond Fields, for riots, bloodshed and anarchy characterized the early days of British administration in Griqualand West.

The clumsy diplomacy, to which reference has already been made, must not be lost sight of. Then there was a disappointed capitalistic politician, who had ruined his career as a statesman by an act of mad folly, and who was burning to be revenged on those whom he had bitterly wronged. Last, but not least, there were three immensely powerful but unavowed forces, which may be conveniently described as greed of gold, lust of empire and a thirst for revenge. The first was represented by Capitalism, in its pleas for a change in the administration of the Republic, which would result in higher dividends, based upon cheaper white labor and a modified system of black slavery. The second was voiced by the yellow press of London, and posed as Jingoism pure and simple; it was intoxicated but not satiated by the successes of Omdurman and Fashoda, and shouted loudly for the suppression of the two "nebulous" Republics which marred the symmetry of the South African map. The third was strikingly illustrated by the farewell cry of the crowd, "Remember Majuba!" as the troop-laden trains steamed out of the terminal stations in London.

There is another element, however, in the situation which must be kept steadily in view in apportioning the blame for this deplorable tragedy in South Africa. I refer to the growth of personal rule as embodied in the High Commissioner of South Africa.

For those who are unacquainted with local conditions, it may be necessary to explain that the supreme imperial representative in South Africa is the High Commissioner, who is at the same time Governor of the Cape Colony. In dealing with strictly Colonial matters, the High Commissioner, as Governor of the Cape Colony,

is bound to act constitutionally with the advice and consent of his Colonial Ministers. His duties as High Commissioner, however, embrace the care of imperial interests in Rhodesia and Basutoland, as well as the conduct of negotiations with the Governments of the South African Republic and the Orange Free State. In the exercise of these duties he would be technically correct in acting autocratically and in ignoring the views and advice of his Colonial Ministers. Whether he would be wise in acting in such a manner is quite another matter. Those who are intimately acquainted with the conditions in South Africa would unhesitatingly answer the question in the negative for the following reasons. It is impossible for the High Commissioner to take any important step in regard to either the Transvaal or the Orange Free State without its having very marked direct or indirect results in the Cape Colony and Natal, because the same racial sentiment and social conditions exist in the Free State and the Transvaal as in the Cape Colony and Natal. The countries are closely connected by the ties of blood and kinship.

The Boer in the Transvaal and in the Free State is almost exactly the same type as his kinsman in Natal and the Cape Colony. Some of the most progressive and liberal-minded Boers in South Africa are to be found in the districts of Ermelo, Wakker-Stroom and Utrecht, in the Transvaal, and in the districts of Winburg and Harrismith, in the Free State, while some of the most backward and uneducated types are subjects of Queen Victoria, living in the districts of Prince Albert, Carnarvon and Beaufort West. The Boers are practically the same throughout all South Africa; they inhabit the country districts; they are inclined to be conservative, averse to high taxation, intensely imbued with local patriotism and unaffected by imperial developments beyond the confines of South Africa. In a word, their political horizon is limited by the boundaries of South Africa. The local English, on the other hand, with the exception of a few farmers in the North-eastern Province of the Cape Colony and in the coast districts of Natal, are dwellers in towns, full of imperial patriotism and somewhat contemptuous of local politics, overflowing with zeal for imperial expansion, and singing "God Save the Queen," in season and out of season, not so much in the spirit of a prayer for the Sovereign as a trumpet-note of defiance to the Dutch.

The Dutch in the Cape Colony are perfectly loyal to and con-

tent with British rule, and no dissatisfaction is expressed as long as their kinsmen in the Orange Free State and the South African Republic are left unmolested. They have always been opposed to changes in the Constitution, even to the substitution of responsible government for direct imperial rule. It is this very conservatism and contentment with British administration that would be an effective obstacle to any conspiracy for the purpose of introducing a Republican instead of a Colonial form of government. The Cape Colonial Dutch, who form quite three-fifths of the whole population, have seen their kinsmen oppressed, pursued, wronged and unsympathetically treated by Great Britain for nearly a hundred years, and they are extremely sensitive on this point. It is this vigilance and the very natural expression of dissatisfaction at England's constant violation of her pledges to their Republican brethren, which have been adduced as reasons to justify the theory of "Disloyalty" and the "Great Dutch Conspiracy" to which reference has already been made. The Cape Colony is the oldest settlement in South Africa, and the Colonial Ministers, fortified by local knowledge and permanent traditions, are perfectly justified in attempting to influence the High Commissioner, who, no matter how distinguished or able he may be, arrives at Cape Town a stranger, ignorant of local conditions and absolutely inexperienced as to South African politics. It will be readily conceded, therefore, that it is of the utmost importance that the High Commissioner of South Africa, as well as the Governor of Cape Colony, should be guided by the advice and experience of his Colonial Ministers, and should so shape his policy as to harmonize imperial ideals with colonial sentiment. Such a policy would tend toward confederation or union; it would strengthen and deepen the loyalty of the Cape Dutch; and while fully respecting the rights and the independence of the two Republics, would enable the latter to co-operate cordially with the Colonies in promoting the welfare of South Africa.

The history of the relations between the High Commissioners and the successive Cape Ministers since 1877 would yield very instructive results. It is, however, not possible now to do more than roughly sketch the outlines and characteristics of the different policies and attitudes adopted by the four imperial officers who have presided over the destinies of South Africa since 1877.

The following is a list of the High Commissioners, with a

fairly correct indication of the duration of their successive terms of office: Sir Bartle Frere, 1877 to 1880; Sir Hercules Robinson, 1880 to 1889; Sir Henry Loch, 1889 to 1894; Sir Hercules Robinson, 1895 to 1897; Sir Alfred Milner, 1897.

Sir Bartle Frere was one of the most distinguished officers in the imperial service. His successful career in India entitled him to a far more important position than that of the High Commissionership of South Africa. He was, however, specially solicited by the Colonial Secretary, Lord Carnarvon, to accept the position in order to carry out his policy of confederation. As an inducement he was promised the position of the first Governor-General of United South Africa, with a salary of £10,000 a year. Sir Bartle Frere accepted the position, and in April, 1877, assumed the duties of High Commissioner. It must not be forgotten that he had been trained in the school of Indian administration, which is nothing more or less than a pure military despotism. In January, 1878, Imperialism and Colonialism came into conflict over the conduct of a colonial war with the Gcalekas, a Kafir tribe in the Transkei. He quarreled with his Ministers and took the high-handed course of dismissing them, and requesting Sir Gordon Sprigg, the leader of the opposition, but an untried politician, to form another Ministry. The personal popularity and prestige of Sir Bartle Frere enabled him to obtain from the Cape Parliament an indorsement of this arbitrary proceeding. But it was the first of the many fatal steps in his career of personal rule.

The triumph of personal rule then, as now, was marked by a trail of blood in every part of South Africa. Gcalekas, Gaikas, Tembus, Zulus, Basutos, and, ultimately, Boers, were sacrificed on the altar of autocratic power. The opposition to Sir Bartle Frere's policy spread from South Africa to Great Britain, and ultimately became so overwhelming that the British Government decided upon his recall in 1880, and a distinguished career was ended in disgrace.

His successor, Sir Hercules Robinson, arrived at the Cape at the end of 1880. His term of office was inaugurated by the outbreak of the Boer War of Independence, and he was thus confronted at the outset of his career by difficulties that certainly appeared insurmountable. Peace was concluded shortly after Majuba, and the Convention of 1881 restored to the Boers a very limited instalment of the independence which they had enjoyed under

the Sand River Convention before the annexation of 1877. Long after the excitement of the war had subsided in the Transvaal and Free State, the reflex action of sympathy with their kinsmen made itself felt in the Cape Colony. The Cape Dutch awoke to political life, and there was much ferment and unrest, the direct outcome of indignation with the imperial Government in annexing and retaining the Transvaal, against the wish of its inhabitants, up to the climax of bloodshed. Sir Hercules Robinson's tenure of office also embraced that very critical period in South African history which culminated in the Bechuanaland Expedition and the settlement of the western border. The foregoing will indicate some of the difficulties which confronted him during his administration. The Dutch, now fully awake, had become a political power, and have controlled the fate of the different Ministries at the Cape from that time until the present moment. The uprising of Dutch sentiment was said to be originally inimical to British interests; under unwise or autocratic administration it might easily have been consolidated into an element of permanent hostility to Great Britain. But Sir Hercules Robinson, by working in harmony with his Ministers on strictly constitutional lines, succeeded in establishing a sane Imperialism on the broad basis of colonial sentiment. He rejected all ideas of personal rule, was sternly intolerant of Jingoism, Empire-leagues and all the paraphernalia of a bastard Imperialism. When he arrived in Cape Town he found that Imperialism had been debased and was at its lowest ebb. It is no exaggeration to say that when he left, the prestige of true Imperialism was higher than it ever has been either before or since. The breach between English and Dutch was healed, and harmony and confidence characterized the relations between Great Britain and the Republics.

"Sir Hercules Robinson," President Krüger once exclaimed, "ah! he was a man of his word." His term of office really expired in 1885, but so successful had his administration been that he was asked to remain, and did so until 1889. Before leaving he made an important speech at Cape Town, of which the following extracts sufficiently indicate the lines of his policy:

"There are three competing influences in South Africa. They are Colonialism, Republicanism and Imperialism. As to the last, it is a diminishing quantity, there being now no longer any permanent place in the future of South Africa for direct imperial rule on any large

scale. . . . The 'Governor-General in embryo,' of whom we have heard who is to administer, as in India, a system of personal as distinguished from Parliamentary rule, and round whom the several Colonies and States are to rally, will, I venture to think, remain permanently 'in embryo.' . . . There being then, as I have shown, no longer any permanent place in South Africa for direct imperial rule, and viewing it simply as an aid to colonial expansion, there remain only the competing influences of Colonialism and Republicanism. Whether these will always retain, as at present, their separate organisms, or whether one will, like Aaron's rod, absorb the other, is a problem which I will not attempt to discuss, but I venture to think that British Colonialism is very heavily handicapped in the race by the well-meant but mistaken interference of irresponsible and ill-informed persons in England. The tendency of such amateur meddling, to my mind, is injurious in the long run to the natives, while it makes every resident in the Republics—English as well as Dutch—rejoice in their independence, and converts many a colonist from an Imperialist into a Republican."

This speech created a sensation in England and was the subject of debates in Parliament and of leading articles in the press.

The *Times*, in its issue of the 6th of June, 1889, while taking exception to certain portions of the foregoing speech, advocated the return of Sir Hercules, and concluded its article as follows:

"No Governor of Cape Colony has as yet ever proved able to give perfect satisfaction to his two masters (the Colonial Office and the Cape Cabinet). Sir Hercules Robinson has completely contented the Colonists, which is, after all, the chief thing needful, and probably no one will reconcile better than he the conflicting duties of the position."

In 1893 Sir Hercules Robinson, in the course of a conversation on the subject of Swaziland and the Transvaal, remarked that experience at the Cape had convinced him that there was only one true way of governing South Africa, and that was through the Dutch. The Dutch were a permanent factor, intensely imbued with local patriotism, loyal to the Crown when their racial sentiments were not outraged, and perfectly easy to reconcile with a legitimate Imperialism. The English were, for the most part, townspeople; some of them rather deficient in local patriotism, but surcharged at times with inconvenient loyalty to England, which left them at the mercy of every irresponsible agitator who might appeal to racial passions. The High Commissioner should sternly discourage anything like racial cleavage and attain Imperialism by shaping it in accordance with local and Dutch sentiment. Such a policy might necessitate ignoring, if not repressing, the ultra-Loyalists of the English party. Sir Hercules Robinson

concluded by saying that no one had strengthened his convictions in this direction more than Mr. Rhodes, whom he termed a "sound Afrikander." After his return to England this most important position in the British Empire was said to have been hawked about and cheapened before it was finally accepted by Sir Henry Loch, the Governor of Victoria. He entered upon his duties toward the end of 1889. Unlike Sir Hercules Robinson, who was cold and reserved in manner and somewhat indifferent to general social functions, Sir Henry Loch, like Sir Bartle Frere, possessed great personal charm and affability, while Government House soon became noted as a delightful social centre. But the influence of social charm does not extend much beyond Cape Town and its suburbs, whereas the policy of a High Commissioner makes itself felt in the remotest corners of South Africa. Sir Henry Loch had only been in Cape Town a short time when the impression, rightly or wrongly, got abroad that the new High Commissioner was hostile to President Krüger and to the Dutch Republic. In Johannesburg there was a certain amount of discontent owing to the depression, caused by the inevitable reaction after the great gold boom of 1889. Disappointed speculators, however, generally vent their spleen upon the administration, which in the Transvaal has always been a convenient scapegoat, especially during a slump in the market. But the dissatisfaction had hitherto been expressed within strictly constitutional limits. An event happened, in the early part of 1890, which caused a great deal of excitement. President Krüger was on a visit to Johannesburg, when a riot took place, the President being hissed and hooted, amid shouts of "God Save the Queen," and the Transvaal flag was hauled down and torn to shreds. The beginning of Sir Henry Loch's career may be said to have been marked in Johannesburg by a riot in 1890, and to have terminated by what was very nearly a serious disturbance at Pretoria in 1894. Sir Henry Loch, who had an insatiable appetite for conferences, proceeded to Pretoria to discuss Swaziland and other questions with the Republican Government. On his arrival at the station he was met by President Krüger and the members of the Executive. There was considerable excitement among the crowd and a disturbance took place. To quote Sir Henry Loch's description:

"When I entered the carriage with President Krüger, two men got on to the box with a Union Jack, and the crowd, notwithstanding the

President's remonstrances, took the horses out and dragged the carriage to the hotel, a distance of nearly a mile, singing all the way, 'God Save the Queen' and 'Rule, Britannia.' "

It is not for an instant suggested that Sir Henry Loch was cognizant of or approved of these riotous proceedings. On the contrary, the latter incident must have been as embarrassing to him as it was annoying to President Krüger, but the impression prevailed, rightly or wrongly, that he was antagonistic to the Republic. Sir Hercules Robinson visited Pretoria at a far more critical time, in January, 1896, but his arrival and stay in Pretoria were not characterized by any untoward incident.

The relations of Sir Henry Loch with the Pretoria Government were not satisfactory; he was constantly sending impressive warnings to President Krüger, coupled with professions of the most friendly feelings. The same warnings and remonstrances were urged upon officials and friends of the Government during visits to Cape Town. Swaziland, in the meantime, which the Transvaal wished to absorb, was kept dangling before the Republic as a sort of bait to induce it to enter the customs union and to make concessions to the British. The result of this policy, however well meant, was deplorable, for Sir Henry Loch became profoundly distrusted in Pretoria, and his great charm of manner simply created an impression of duplicity. Notwithstanding the demonstration in Pretoria, Sir Henry Loch did not enjoy the entire confidence of the English population in the Transvaal, for the *Star*, an irreconcilable Uitlander and "anti-Boer" organ, characterized his administration as "feeble and fussy," an indorsement of what was said to be the verdict passed upon his tenure of office in Australia. But he was not only a victim of misunderstanding as far as the Boers were concerned; he appears to have been entirely misunderstood by so able and intelligent a representative of the Uitlanders as Mr. Lionel Phillips, by whom he was visited during his stay in Pretoria, in 1894. To quote from Mr. Phillips's letter to Mr. Wernher, of the firm of Wernher, Beit & Co., London:

"Sir Henry Loch (with whom I had two long private interviews alone) asked me some very pointed questions, such as what arms we had in Johannesburg; whether the population could hold the place for six days, etc., etc., and stated plainly that if there had been 3,000 rifles and ammunition here he would certainly have come over. He further informed me in a significant way that they had prolonged

the Swazi agreement of six months, and said he supposed in that time Johannesburg would be better prepared, as much as to say, 'If things are safer then we shall actively intervene.' "

A peerage had been bestowed on Sir Henry Loch, and on the 1st of May, 1896, the date on which the foregoing letter from Mr. Lionel Phillips was first made public in Europe, he, as Lord Loch, made a statement in the House of Lords, in reference to the arming of Johannesburg, of which the following is an extract :

"To strengthen my position with the Deputation, I asked them what amount of arms they had at that time in Johannesburg. They informed me that they had 1,000 rifles, and that at the outside they did not believe they had ten rounds of ammunition per rifle. I then pointed out to them the situation, not as an encouragement to resist, but to show them what a futile measure it would be if any action on their part brought about disturbances and a consequent attack."

In the same statement Lord Loch admitted that he had taken steps to place certain imperial police on that fatal spot, the Bechuanaland border, in case disturbances arose in Johannesburg. In other words, preparations were made for an imperial raid into the Transvaal, to be justified as protection for British interests. With regard to Sir Henry Loch's relations with his Cape Ministers, it is no secret that there was constant friction on the very question of the conflicting interests involved in the two positions of High Commissioner and Governor of the Cape Colony. Sir Henry Loch's tendencies were all in the direction of personal rule, but he was fortunately not a strong man, and his autocratic aims were qualified by prudence. To do him justice he was equally watchful of Mr. Rhodes, who exemplified at this stage of his career certain aspects of personal rule. Sir Henry Loch retired at the end of 1894, or beginning of 1895, and the choice of Lord Ripon, the Colonial Secretary, fell upon Sir Hercules Robinson as his successor.

The political conditions of South Africa had, however, sadly changed since 1889—the relations between the South African Republic and Great Britain were unsatisfactory; the racial cleavage in the Transvaal was very marked; the power and prestige of Mr. Rhodes had increased enormously; while the attitude of the Cape Dutch was one of renewed vigilance as to imperial designs upon the Transvaal. Sir Hercules Robinson was, moreover, an old man, and his health began to fail shortly after his arrival at the Cape. Had he been induced by Lord Knutsford to remain as High Commissioner after 1889 it would have been an act of the highest

political wisdom and would no doubt have brought about marked and beneficial results upon the development of South Africa. But in 1895 matters had gone too far and he was powerless to avert the catastrophe of the Raid. He was deceived and kept in absolute ignorance of what was going on. Immediately after the Raid he proceeded to Pretoria, damped the revolutionary movement in Johannesburg and was the only imperial official who satisfied the Government at Pretoria of absolute *bona fides* in repudiating the action of the Raiders and Reformers. On the 4th of January, 1896, he telegraphed to Mr. Chamberlain: "I take this early opportunity of testifying in the strongest manner to the great moderation and forbearance of the Government of the South African Republic under the exceptionally trying circumstances." Sir Hercules Robinson left Pretoria on the 15th of January, having received the thanks of the Executive and Volksraad for his services. He had averted bloodshed in Johannesburg, for a collision at that time between the Boers and Uitlanders would have been an awful catastrophe. "I have been confronted by many difficulties," he once said, "but I have one formula which I have never known to fail, and that is, Do what is right." Imperial prestige, imperial honor and imperial dignity had been lowered and dragged in the mire by Dr. Jameson, Mr. Rhodes, and afterward by Mr. Chamberlain. It is safe to assert that if any shred of imperial dignity and honor was preserved in South Africa, it was due to the integrity and high-mindedness of Sir Hercules Robinson. He successfully withstood Mr. Chamberlain's efforts at inopportune interference and his wish to use force as a remedy in South Africa, but his health completely broke down, and after a visit to England in 1896, when he was raised to the Peerage as Lord Rosmead, he retired from the position early in 1897. Mr. Chamberlain selected Sir Alfred Milner as the new High Commissioner.

The latter had enjoyed the distinction of a brilliant university career at Oxford; he had served on the staff of a well-known newspaper; he had been an unsuccessful candidate for Parliamentary honors; but he first came into prominence as Mr. Goschen's secretary, and cemented his success by the ability with which he had discharged the duties of Under Secretary of Finance in Egypt.

His appointment was greeted by a perfect chorus of approval. The Unionist press vied with the Radical journals in extolling his moderation, his tact, his impartiality, his patience, and his

personal charm. The newspapers and society united in attributing to him just those qualities which were needed to deal with the delicate situation which had arisen in South Africa. Here and there, however, a doubtful note was sounded as to the wisdom of Mr. Chamberlain's choice. One view—that of a Conservative—was that Sir Alfred Milner's success in life lay in the fact of his being a courtier, who placed his abilities and entire energies at the service of his chiefs, and that he had thereby gained their affection, esteem and support. He had proved a most capable official and administrator in a subordinate position, but it was doubted whether he was fitted for a position of such responsibility and power as that involved in the High Commissionership.

A Radical view of Sir Alfred Milner, expressed immediately after the appointment was made, was to the effect that, although he possessed all the good qualities which had been enumerated by an appreciative press, yet these were neutralized and even rendered dangerous by the fact that he was a Jingo of the most pronounced type. It was feared that he might easily be led to the conviction that force was the only remedy for the distracting conditions of the South African problem. If he did adopt that conclusion, nothing would stop him, and his reputation for moderation and patience would make him all the more dangerous in influencing public opinion.

Sir Alfred Milner's experiences in Egypt, which are set forth in his work, "England in Egypt," were hardly a happy omen to South Africa. The influence of British domination may have proved distinctly beneficent in Egypt, but the administration is a military despotism. The coercion of the fellaheen, the intimidation of the Khédive and the Egyptian pashas by threats and a display of military force are hardly the methods necessary for governing the descendants of the Dutch who had successfully withstood the might of Spanish Philip, or of the Huguenot emigrants who had refused to bow to the imperious will of Louis XIV. An experience of military despotism in India had not produced happy results in the case of Sir Bartle Frere. When Sir Alfred Milner arrived at the Cape in June, 1897, Sir Gordon Sprigg—who had proved to be such a passive instrument in the hands of Sir Bartle Frere—happened to be Prime Minister. It is interesting to observe that Sir Gordon Sprigg was among the first, if not the very first, to raise publicly, as an electioneering cry, the question of

British supremacy in South Africa. For this, curiously enough, he was roundly rebuked by the *Times*, which afterward adopted this shibboleth as one of its favorite battle cries. To return to Sir Alfred Milner. A speech made by him at Graaff Reinet in the Cape Colony clearly indicated his anti-Transvaal bias, and a subsequent speech at Swellendam foreshadowed the exercise of personal rule by the importance which the speaker attached to the High Commissionership as distinguished from the Governorship of the Cape Colony. Much to the consternation of Sir Alfred Milner, the elections of 1898 resulted in the defeat of the Progressives and in the triumph of the Afrikaner Bond under Mr. Schreiner. It is probable that the relations between Mr. Schreiner and the High Commissioner were unsatisfactory from the very first, and that the personal rule of the latter began from that moment to make itself felt in South Africa. Sir Alfred Milner paid a short visit to England in the beginning of 1899 for the purpose, it has been stated, of urging a policy of force upon the British Government. During his absence the Commander-in-Chief at the Cape, Sir William Butler, acted as High Commissioner, and, following the example of Sir Hercules Robinson, worked harmoniously with the Cape Ministry on constitutional lines. His short tenure of office was marked by three important incidents. First of all, he refused to receive a petition to the Queen, organized by the South African League at Johannesburg. Secondly, he warned the Imperial Government against accepting the statements of this mischievous body, and, thirdly, he made a speech at Grahamstown in which he declared that South Africa was in need of rest, and did not require a surgical operation. Upon Sir Alfred Milner's return, Sir William Butler's policy was immediately reversed. The South African League got up another petition, this time ostensibly containing 21,000 signatures. It was unreservedly accepted by Sir Alfred Milner and forwarded to the Imperial Government. He co-operated with the South African League, and every one will admit that a very serious surgical operation is now being performed in South Africa as the outcome of his policy. Sir William Butler was recalled.

Space does not permit any discussion about the abortive Bloemfontein conference, which, in Sir Alfred Milner's spirit of no compromise and "irreducible minimums," was doomed to failure from the very first. Compromise is the essence of South African

politics, and, with the exception of the annexation in 1877, had characterized all the transactions between the Imperial Government and the South African Republic since 1852. Sir Alfred Milner's astounding dispatch of May 5, 1899, with its reference to "helots" and "festering sores," and its cravings for a "striking proof" of imperial power, must also be passed over. His career was now nothing else but a triumphant development of personal rule. He absolutely ignored his Colonial Ministers, and treated them as traitors; the clergymen of the Dutch Reformed Church and the majority of the Cape Parliament, in their efforts for peace, suffered the same fate. "I am determined to break the power of Afrikanderdom," he arrogantly informed Mr. Molteno, the delegate of the Cape members. It was this spirit which induced him to cable over *in extenso* all the inflammatory resolutions of reactionary associations, and to suppress information as to the pacific endeavors of President Steyn, satisfying his official conscience by a meaningless summary of important communications. A further incident will illustrate the arbitrary nature of his rule. Endeavors were made by a section of the Cape people to induce Sir Alfred Milner to petition Queen Victoria to send one of her characteristic messages to the Cape Dutch, who were placed in a position of agonizing difficulty. The person of the Queen is held in the highest veneration by the Dutch throughout all South Africa. Her qualities as a noble woman, leading a simple life, and as a pattern mother, appeal strongly to the Dutch, and it was felt that a kindly message from the Queen would have the most beneficial effect upon the Cape Dutch. It is reported that Sir Alfred Milner haughtily refused, and concluded by saying that he had made up his mind that there was no room for two white races in South Africa. Such a statement would be incredible were it not that Sir Alfred Milner's proceedings during the six months before the war have been characterized by the maddest folly. His acts have been an eloquent falsification of the attributes of tact, moderation, prudence, patience and impartiality, which were so abundantly postulated at the time of his appointment.

At Bloemfontein he was advocating democratic constitutionalism to President Krüger in order to assure British ascendancy in the Transvaal. At the Cape, on the other hand, in the interests of the same ascendancy, he was using all means in his power to

override and crush constitutionalism by contemptuously ignoring the Dutch majority in Parliament, and treating their Ministers as traitors. It seems as if the Dutch had to be ground between the lower and the nether millstones. What a commentary on the cry of equal rights! What an outcome of the policy of reconciling the two races! The irony would be ludicrous if it were not overshadowed by the grim tragedy of suffering. Constitutionalism has once more been defied, and personal rule is again triumphant, and, just as in the time of Sir Bartle Frere, its success is marked by bloodshed and carnage.

The various forces and influences which have been allowed to flow unchecked in the direction of this deplorable war have been briefly touched upon. But there are three persons—Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Alfred Milner, and Mr. Rhodes, each in himself an exemplification of the danger of autocratic power—who have a large and direct responsibility for this calamity.

The power of the High Commissioner, if unchecked by constitutionalism, is almost supreme in South Africa, while the prestige of the position and the paramount importance attached to the office in England are sufficiently great to impose a salutary check upon the dangerous interference of the Imperial Parliament, as well as upon autocratic or inopportune intervention on the part of the British Colonial Secretary.

Sir Alfred Milner has had magnificent opportunities for doing beneficent imperial work in South Africa. But instead of using his great influence in removing the distrust and unrest in South Africa, which were intensified by the clumsy diplomacy of Mr. Chamberlain after the Raid; instead of checking and sternly repressing mischievous and reactionary organizations like the South African League, of which Mr. Rhodes is the President; instead of ignoring and discountenancing the frenzied efforts of the local newspapers, which are largely controlled by Mr. Rhodes, he appears to have utilized all these baneful forces for the purpose of bringing about this disastrous war in South Africa, the far-reaching consequences of which no man is able to foresee.

MONTAGU WHITE.